

23 November 2023

Dear Members of the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention,

We, the undersigned 34 freedom of expression and human rights organisations, are writing regarding the recent submission to the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (UNWGAD) filed on behalf of the award-winning writer and activist **Alaa Abd El-Fattah**, a British-Egyptian citizen.

On 14 November 2023, Alaa Abd El-Fattah and his family filed an urgent appeal with the UNWGAD, submitting that his continuing detention in Egypt is arbitrary and contrary to international law. Alaa Abd El-Fattah and his family are represented by an International Counsel team led by English barrister Can Yeğinsu.

Alaa Abd-El Fattah has spent much of the past decade imprisoned in Egypt on charges related to his writing and activism and remains arbitrarily detained in Wadi al-Natrun prison and denied consular visits. He is a key case of concern to our organisations.

Around this time last year (11 November 2022), [UN Experts](#) in the Special Procedures of the UN Human Rights Council joined the growing chorus of human rights voices demanding Abd el-Fattah's immediate release.

We, the undersigned organisations, are writing in support of the recent UNWGAD submission and to urge the Working Group to consider and announce their opinion on Abd El-Fattah's case at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

Brett Solomon, Executive Director, **Access Now**

Ahmed Samih Farag, General Director, **Andalus Institute for Tolerance and Anti-Violence Studies**

Quinn McKew, Executive Director, **ARTICLE 19**

Bahey eldin Hassan, Director, **Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)**

Jodie Ginsberg, President, **Committee to Protect Journalists**

Sayed Nasr, Executive Director, **EgyptWide for Human Rights**

Ahmed Attalla, Executive Director, **Egyptian Front for Human Rights**

Samar Elhousseiny, Programs Officer, **Egyptian Human Rights Forum (EHRF)**

Jillian C. York, Director for International Freedom of Expression, **Electronic Frontier Foundation**

Daniel Gorman, Director, **English PEN**

Wadih Al Asmar, President, **EuroMed Rights**

James Lynch, Co-Director, **FairSquare**

Ruth Kronenburg, Executive Director, **Free Press Unlimited**

Khalid Ibrahim, Executive Director, **Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR)**

Adam Coogle, Deputy Middle East Director, **Human Rights Watch**

Sarah Sheykhal, Executive Director, and Mostafa Fouad, Head of Programs, **HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement**

Matt Redding, Head of Advocacy, **IFEX**

Baroness Helena Kennedy KC, Director, **International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute**

Alice Mogwe, President, **International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)**, within the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders

Shireen Al Khatib, Acting Director, **The Palestinian Center For Development and Media Freedoms (MADA)**

Liesl Gerntholtz, Director, Freedom To Write Center, **PEN America**

Grace Westcott, President, **PEN Canada**

Romana Cacchioli, Executive Director, **PEN International**

Tess McEney, Executive Director, **Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED)**

Antoine Bernard, Director of Advocacy and Assistance, **Reporters Sans Frontières**

Ricky Monahan Brown, President, **Scottish PEN**

Ahmed Salem, Executive Director, **Sinai Foundation for Human Rights (SFHR)**

Mohamad Najem, Executive Director, **SMEX**

Mazen Darwish, General Director, **The Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM)**

Mai El-Sadany, Executive Director, **Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy (TIMEP)**

Kamel Labidi, Board member, **Vigilance for Democracy and the Civic State**

Aline Batarseh, Executive Director, **Visualizing Impact**

Menna Elfyn, President, **Wales PEN Cymru**

Miguel Martín Zumalacárregui, Head of the Europe Office, **World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)**, within the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders